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ABSTRACT

Developed for college English courses, this book presents selections of poetry, short stories, and commentary intended to invite different ways of reading and interpreting literature. An introduction provides an overview of the book's content, as well as a discussion of how to read. The first section, "Entering a Language," considers the development of a reader, the variety of worlds that can be entered through reading, and how these other worlds modify a readers' relationships to their own world. The second section, "Losing Nature? Gaining Culture?" concerns the relationship between nature and culture, and how one learns to "read" these two interacting, often opposing, worlds. Finally, the theme of the third section, "Negotiations and Renegotiations," focuses on how people negotiate the relationship between their culture and its values, with other cultures, and with people who may represent values different from the reader's values. Each text begins with a brief introduction, followed by the text itself, then a presentation of the key features and issues that the text offers. In addition, occasional brief commentaries are included on important aspects of reading and of the particular "reading," and most of the texts are followed by suggestions for discussion and reflection. Suggestions for various writing prompts are offered at the end of each chapter. Some of the selections included in this book are: "Captain Murder" (Charles Dickens); "In the Fig Tree I Learned to Read" (Lillian Hellman); "Through the Eyes of Men" (Simone de Beauvoir); "Autobiographical Notes" (James Baldwin); "Fifteen" (William Stafford); "The First Day of School" (Cynthia Ozick); "Sunrise" (Eudora Welty); "Memories of Waves" (Walt Whitman); "I Know Green Apples" (Mark Twain); "Song of the Hen's Head" (Margaret Atwood); "Down By the Salley Gardens" (W. B. Yeats); "On Reading Fiction" (Philip Roth); and "Stranger on a Train" (Virginia Woolf). (MM)

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